



*INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE*

# TESTIMONY

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**Statement of  
Captain John Salle  
On Behalf of The  
International Association of Chiefs of Police  
On the National Preparedness System  
Before the  
Subcommittee on Economic Development,  
Public Buildings and Emergency  
Management  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives**

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Good Afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), I am pleased to join you here this afternoon to discuss the National Preparedness System and its application to the threats posed to our communities, whether they are posed by terrorists, industrial accidents or severe weather events.

As you may know, the IACP, with more than 20,000 members in over 100 countries, is the world's oldest and largest association of law enforcement executives. Founded in 1893, the IACP has dedicated itself to the mission of advancing the law enforcement profession and aiding our members in their efforts to protect the citizens they serve. Over the past three years, the IACP has worked closely with a number of federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to ensure that the needs, capabilities and concerns of the nation's law enforcement agencies were taken into consideration as our nation responded to the menace of terrorism.

For the past thirty-two years I was privileged to serve as a member of the Oregon State Police. At the time of my retirement in February, I was the Director of the Oregon State Police Office of Public Safety and Security. At this same time, I was also serving as the Deputy Director of the newly formed Oregon Office of Homeland Security.

In addition, for the past two years, I have had the opportunity to represent the IACP as a member of the Department of Homeland Security's State, Local and Tribal Working Group. Through this working group, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has been intimately involved in the development of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Plan (NRP), and the components of Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 8 Preparedness.

The State, Local and Tribal Working Group has been meeting on a consistent basis for the past two years. Its membership consists of representatives from the National Sheriffs' Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Native American Law Enforcement Association, the National Emergency Managers Association, the International Association of Emergency Managers, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Volunteer Firefighters Coalition, the City of New York Emergency Management, the National Association of City and County Health Officials, the US Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Towns and Townships, and the American Public Works Association. As you can tell from this membership roster, the working group encompasses a wide variety of public safety agencies that ensured that our efforts were well balanced and represented the concerns of many disciplines.

As a result of this balance, the working group was able to incorporate the views of actual practitioners into the drafts of the national policies that have been developed. In this fashion, we have worked closely with DHS to ensure that policy documents they have

issued are comprehensive while not being overly prescriptive in dictating a one-size-fits-all approach to state, local and tribal public safety agencies.

Through my participation in this working group and in my experience with the Oregon State Police, I have witnessed that the coordinated federal policies implemented as a result of Homeland Security Presidential Directives 5, 7 and 8, have resulted in a significant increase in cross-discipline planning, training, and exercises. In addition, noticeable progress has been made in equipping public safety agencies with interoperable communications equipment.

It is important to note that these efforts on the federal, state, tribal and local level, although somewhat focused on terrorism, are creating a level of preparedness that applies to any hazard. Simply put, if first response agencies plan together, train on a common command and control structure, and jointly exercise those capabilities, the creation of a better, more unified response to any catastrophe or hazard is inevitable.

The next step in this critical process is combining the National Response Plan and the National Incident Management System with a national credentialing and equipment typing protocol. In this way, we can assure that federal, state, tribal and local public safety agencies not only have the proper command and communication structure in place to operate effectively, but that all components will be properly trained and equipped. For example, under this scenario a SWAT team or a bomb squad could travel to the next city or region, assume the appropriate function within the Incident Command System, and be set to work in a terrorism situation or in *any* situation requiring the skills that they bring.

At the same time, because of national credential and equipment typing protocol, the incident commanders would know exactly what capabilities and assets this unit provides.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I believe that over the past three years, we have made significant progress in our efforts to integrate and coordinate the activities of the tens of thousands of federal, state, tribal and local public safety agencies that operate in the United States. But it is important to remember that we are far from finished. The policies that have been crafted to date are dynamic, living works that will improve over time from lessons learned and the establishment of best practices. It is also true that some jurisdictions, particularly those who have not previously utilized some type of Incident Command Structure response structure, will undoubtedly have a steeper learning curve than others, and this may lead to some frustration. However, the IACP firmly believes that the benefits to be gained through the establishment of common command and communication systems that will allow for a coordinated collective response to disasters, whether natural or man-made, make this effort extremely worthwhile.